

Massachusetts Water Resources Commission

**Meeting Minutes for February 13, 1996**

**Commission Members in Attendance:**

Mark P. Smith	Designee, Executive Office of Environmental Affairs
Peter Webber	Commissioner, Department of Environmental Management
Marilyn Contreas	Designee, Department of Housing and Community Development
Arleen O'Donnell	Designee, Department of Environmental Protection
Joseph McGinn	Designee, Metropolitan District Commission
Karen Pelto	Designee, Department of Fisheries Wildlife and Environmental Law Enforcement
Robert Zimmerman	Public Member
Gary Clayton	Public Member
Jane Mead	Designee, Coastal Zone Management (non-voting)

**Others in Attendance:**

Lou Wagner	MA Audubon, Lincoln
Michele Drury	DEM, Office of Water Resources
Bruce Blanchard	Wenham Water Department
William Salomaa	DEM, Office of Water Resources
Duane LeVangie	DEP, Water Management Program
Lealdon Langley	DEP, Water Management Program
Carl Hillstrom	Duxbury Water Department
Wally Tonaszuck	Duxbury Public Works Department
Kate Bowditch	Charles River Watershed Association
Sherry Winkelman	Charles River Watershed Association
Vicki Gartland	DEM, Office of Water Resources

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Agenda Item #1: Executive Director's Report

Smith reported that:

- He is continuing his effort to meet with each WRC member to discuss which issues the WRC should focus on.
- Nine watershed initiative grants have been awarded to date.
- He attended an Ipswich River Task Force meeting, where he observed the watershed initiative in action and learned more about the process.
- A Watershed Initiative analysis and recommendations will be presented soon by the Cadmus group.
- The Rivers Bill draft regulations are due from DEP by April 1997.

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Agenda Item #2: Adoption of the meeting minutes for January 9, 1997

The date of the minutes was corrected, and a motion was made by Clayton and seconded by Zimmerman to

ADOPT THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF JANUARY 9, 1997 AS AMENDED.

**The motion passed unanimously.**

Agenda Item #3: Update on Town of Duxbury's Water Management Program

Clayton removed himself from discussion, given Massachusetts Audubon's role in the issue. Langley handed out the Duxbury Mayflower II well Water Management Act permit. He reviewed the previously-set permit conditions which include monitoring North Hill Marsh Pond levels and vegetation monitoring requirements. Langley noted it is too early to conclude whether there are impacts. Another year of monitoring is necessary. In response to a question by Zimmerman, Langley answered that construction of the well access road did not result in a significant increase of impervious material and accelerated runoff.

Tonaszuck reported on Duxbury's successes in implementing effective water conservation policies. He reported, as of last year, total water pumped is down, unaccounted for water is down to 2%, per capita use is down to 83 gpcd, and master meters are calibrated annually. He reported that the following specific permit conditions are being met: meter replacement, increasing block rate and enterprise account structure have been implemented, the Town passed a by-law to facilitate mandatory conservation enforcement at the local level, ongoing leak detection, hired horticulturalist to educate property owners/water users how to water lawns efficiently, town government supports and promotes conservation.

Zimmerman suggested the WRC write to the local newspaper to acknowledge conservation efforts by the town of Duxbury.

Wagner stated he disagrees that well is not impacting North Hill Marsh Pond level. He informed the WRC that Audubon has concerns. He also commented it is too soon to determine if the plant community is impacted by the well. Wagner handed out an Audubon Memo addressed to the WRC dated Feb. 13, 1997, regarding possible impacts of Mayflower II Well on North Hill Marsh. His memo presented selected hydrologic data, and he concluded the well is impacting water levels. He explained that since 1996 was a wet year compared to 1995 and water levels were similar each year, the well impacted the water level in 1996. He noted the water levels should have been higher in 1996. Tonaszuck commented the water level is regulated by a spillway which maintains a fairly constant level, and is also impacted by cranberry bog diversions.

Tonaszuck commented the water supply industry should be represented on the WRC.

Agenda Item #4: Presentation: Water Needs Forecast, Town of Wenham

Gildesgame summarized Wenham water demand. The town has no Water Management Act permit. Wenham is registered for a withdrawal of 0.29 mgd. Current demand is 0.41 mgd. The Water Management act requires a permit for withdrawals which exceed registered volume by greater than 0.10 mgd. Therefore Wenham exceeds the allowable withdrawal by 0.02 mgd.

Langley noted that current demand of 0.41 is the 2010 demand projection. Wenham submitted a

permit application early last year. Permit conditions included adoption of a water use restrictions bylaw and conservation items. Blanchard informed WRC that Wenham has adopted a water use restrictions bylaw, but have not used it to date. Wenham has one large commercial user. He noted that OTA will be consulted to develop a commercial conservation plan. Webber suggested that Wenham and OTA consult MWRA for conservation guidance. Blanchard noted that Wenham is an affluent town, many new homes are in the \$750,000 range and owners desire green lawns. Such residential users are not concerned with the cost of water.

Langley recommended issuing the Wenham permit, considering the demand has been 0.41 for several years. He noted that permit conditions would include setting conservation compliance standards. Langley said Hamilton was approached to transfer their excess permit amount to Wenham. However Hamilton decided not to give up a portion of their permitted volume. Langley said DEP is not sure if a unilateral reallocation would be sustained if the issue were brought to court. DEP believes a permit is more powerful than a notice of noncompliance.

| Agenda Item #5: Discussion: 2nd Draft, WRC Action Items for 1997

Smith handed out a memo addressed to the WRC from himself and Gildesgame dated February 10, 1997, titled Draft 2 WRC Action Items for 1997. He summarized the memo which presents a draft four step approach to dealing with important issues that have been raised.

Contreas commented that growth management should be incorporated into WRC policy goals. McGinn suggested establishing a new baseline by evaluating the current state of water resources and gauge accomplishments of WRC policies over the past 20 years. O'Donnell suggested looking at impacts/accomplishments of the Water Management and Interbasin Transfer Acts. Pelto reminded members that the WRC favors the term reasonable instream flow over minimum streamflow. Zimmerman suggested that sustainability should be stressed.

Gildesgame commented that WRC should set a reasonable focus and not get bogged down with detail. In response to Smith questioning who will provide staff to conduct work, it was suggested the Water Resources Planning Task Force consider doing the work. Smith and Gildesgame will provide an updated draft at the next WRC meeting.

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meeting minutes approved 3/13/97

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